

## Dollar Bill Mural Faces Uncertain Future

By Jenny Zhang

NEWS EDITOR

Scheduled for demolition over winter break, MIT's dollar bill mural has been spared, at least for now.

Initial plans for converting the recently vacated Cashier's Office into a student lounge called for the replacement of the mural facade with a glass wall, said Phillip J. Walsh, director of the Campus Activities Complex. But after last-minute opposition from some students, the committee is reconsidering construction plans, he said.

Just before final exams last fall, Estevan M. Martinez '08 and Sarah C. Hopp '08 conducted a simple online survey targeted at undergraduates asking whether students wanted the mural to remain or be replaced by glass.

The e-mail publicizing the survey could have introduced a bias, however; it began with the words: "I am writing to you today to help conserve a piece of MIT history." Even taking bias into account, the strong student response "calls for re-evaluating" what to do to the mural, Martinez said.

Over two days, 587 responses were recorded, with 72 percent supporting preserving the mural, although repeated responses from the same person were not prevented, he said.

Though the possibility of the



**The famous one dollar bill mural adorning the wall in front of the former cashier's office was scheduled to be torn down during the holiday break preceding Independent Activities Period. Student protests to the plan, however, have delayed demolition.**

mural's removal was known several months prior, Martinez said he started paying attention when he saw someone photographing the mural because it would be taken down soon. After sending an e-mail to some dormitory discus-

sion e-mail lists soliciting feedback that quickly generated about 70 responses, he decided to bring up the concern at an Undergraduate Association Senate meeting, and the survey was created, he said.

Walsh said that the results of the

survey are being considered by the committee, and that the fate of the mural has not been determined. A decision will be made "hopefully very soon" so that construction can begin, with the project to be com-

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## Tech Square Up for Sale As MIT Finishes Revamp

By Thomas C. Palmer Jr.

THE BOSTON GLOBE

MIT is putting on the market Technology Square, its eight-building, 1.1-million-square-foot life sciences complex on the edge of campus near Kendall Square.

The university hasn't set an asking price, but one real estate executive, who asked not to be identified, said the 5- to 10-story buildings could bring more than a half a billion dollars. MIT purchased the property in 2001 for \$279 million.

"We bought this asset back in 2001 with the intention to reposition it as life sciences," said Steven C. Marsh, managing director of real estate for MIT Investment Management Co. "We achieved that. It's a great time for us to be taking money out of the deal."

MIT transformed the buildings over the past five years from an office park into a combination of laboratory, research and development, and offices to accommodate the region's expanding life sciences industry.

Among its tenants are Novartis AG, Dyax Corp., TolerRx Inc., Forrester Research Inc., and the information company Elsevier.

Like many private owners of commercial property, MIT is trying to sell property at a time of record prices and fierce competition for investment properties.

Cambridge has proven to be a strong magnet for companies with

medical and research missions, and construction prices have risen dramatically since last year's hurricanes. That drives up the cost of construction and makes existing buildings more valuable.

"It's an incredible opportunity to invest with one of the premier technology schools where they're going to maintain an interest," said Rob Griffin, the president of Cushman & Wakefield of Massachusetts, which is handling marketing. "You're investing in the hottest part of the local economy in the Cambridge area."

Marsh said MIT chose now to sell all or part of the property, or "recapitalize," because of favorable market conditions. "There is still a lot of capital looking for domestic product," he said. "We think this looks like a pretty good profile property."

MIT is seeking a buyer or a partner that will invest in the buildings, which occupy most of a huge block on Main Street in Cambridge. The buildings also have been reconfigured by MIT so they are now home to street-level shops, banks, and other elements of neighborhood life that until recently have been notably missing from much of the Kendall Square area.

Even though about 3.5 million square feet have been added to the office and lab market in Cambridge

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## The Odds Get Worse in '06 As Even More Apply to MIT

By Jiao Wang

STAFF REPORTER

Life is getting harder for MIT students, even before they arrive on campus — regular applications rose seven percent this year, following on the heels of a 16 percent jump in early applicants this fall.

This makes the recent hack that changed the lettering on the door to 3-108 from Office of Admissions to Office of Rejections all too true, as more and more applicants vie for the limited number of incoming spots at MIT. A total of 11,231 applicants applied to MIT this year.

The number of international applications, 2,506, shot up by 11 percent from last year, an increase of 203. Although MIT limits the number of international applicants admitted to 10 percent of the total number of admits, this year the number of early international admits doubled, decreasing the number of spaces remaining for international students who submit regular applications.

Students admitted to MIT "need to be the right match," said Dean of Admissions Marilee Jones, who urges high school students to understand the culture of the colleges to which they are applying. She said MIT provides an analytical education that focuses on trying new things and comments on the importance of self-initiative and inner resilience at MIT.

"You have to be comfortable with not getting it right," said Jones. She said the admissions office is looking

**Admissions, Page 18**



**Michael W. D'Auria '06 (#24) attempts to pass past Rhode Island College's Kevin Keefe during the first half of the varsity men's basketball loss against RIC this past Thursday, Jan. 12. For more men's basketball coverage, see sports, page 19.**

### NEWS

This February, the faculty will vote on whether biological engineering will become Course 20.

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# WORLD & NATION

## Iran Proposes New Talks With Europeans

By Elaine Sciolino

THE NEW YORK TIMES

PARIS

Apparently in an effort to win international support and avoid censure by the U.N. Security Council, Iran on Tuesday proposed a resumption of nuclear talks with the Europeans, a move that was immediately rejected by Britain as "vacuous."

The proposal came eight days after Iran resumed nuclear work at three sites in violation of an agreement 16 months ago with France, Germany and Britain that froze most of Iran's nuclear activities. The resumption prompted the European trio to declare the talks dead and call for the Security Council to pass judgment on Iran.

In a letter on Tuesday, Javad Vaeedi, deputy head of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, emphasized Iran's determination to "continue its full cooperation" with the International Atomic Energy Agency, adding that Iran "spares no effort in removing any ambiguity on its peaceful nuclear activities through dialogue and negotiation," according to a copy of the letter obtained by The New York Times.

## Blair Denies Bush Threatened To Bomb Al-Jazeera

By Alan Cowell

THE NEW YORK TIMES

LONDON

The British government denied Tuesday that a leaked memorandum at the heart of a contentious trial contained a threat by President Bush to bomb Al-Jazeera, the Arabic-language television station.

The government had previously withheld substantive comment on a report in *The Daily Mirror* last year that Bush made the threat in a private conversation with Prime Minister Tony Blair at the White House in April 2004 — a time when American commanders in Iraq were publicly critical of Al-Jazeera's coverage of the war in Iraq.

*The Daily Mirror* reported that Blair had dissuaded Bush from bombing the Qatar headquarters of Al-Jazeera. The White House called the report outlandish. The British government warned other newspapers that they would be breaking the law if they also published details of the leaked memo.

The British government issued the denial a week before a British civil servant and a researcher employed by a parliamentary lawmaker are to face trial under the Official Secrets Act on charges relating to the leaked memo.

## Kiss and Tell: She Kisses and the Parrot Tells

By Sarah Lyall

THE NEW YORK TIMES

LONDON

"Hiya, Gary!" the parrot trilled flirtatiously whenever Chris Taylor's girlfriend answered her cell phone.

But Taylor, the owner of the parrot, did not know anyone named Gary. And his girlfriend, Suzy Collins, who had moved into his apartment a year earlier, swore that she didn't, either. She stuck to her story even after the parrot, Ziggy, began making lovey-dovey, smooching noises when it heard the name Gary on television.

And so it went until the fateful day just before Christmas when, as Taylor and Collins snuggled together on the sofa, Ziggy blurted out, "I love you, Gary," his voice a dead ringer for Collins'.

"It sent a chill down my spine," Taylor, a 30-year-old computer programmer from Leeds, told British reporters on Monday. "I started laughing, but when I looked at Suzy I could tell something was up. Her face was like beet root and she started to cry."

Gary, it turned out, was Collins' former colleague and current secret lover.

## A Windy Wednesday Starts A Warm Weekend

By Angela Zalucha

STAFF METEOROLOGIST

As an intense low pressure surface passes north of us today, strong southerly (meteorology jargon for "from the south") winds will persist today and tonight. Wind speeds of 25 to 35 mph with gusts from 45 to 55 mph combined with rain will make for an unpleasant storm. As the sky clears tonight, lows will drop into the lower 30s°F, which is not much lower than the normal high of 36°F. Look for more unseasonably warm weather through the weekend, with perhaps a 50°F reading on Friday. Clouds and a chance for rain on Saturday and Sunday dominate another dreary weekend.

If you think Boston feels windier than most other parts of the country, then you're not alone. According to the National Climatic Data Center, Boston has the highest average wind speed of the major U.S. cities at 12.4 mph. It ranks 20th on the U.S. overall list, but this carries no shame as notoriously windy places like Alaska and the Great Plains states outrank it. Topping the list is Mt. Washington, NH coming in at a whopping 35.1 mph average wind speed and the world's highest wind gust ever recorded: 231 mph on April 12, 1934.

### Extended Forecast

**Today:** Rain and blustery winds. High 48°F (9°C).

**Tonight:** Decreasing clouds. Brisk. Low 32°F (0°C).

**Tomorrow:** Partly to mostly sunny. High 48°F (9°C).

**Tomorrow night:** Partly cloudy. Low 36°F (2°C).

**Friday:** Partly cloudy and unseasonably warm. High 52°F (11°C). Low 39°F (4°C).

**Saturday:** Cloudy with a chance for rain. High 47°F (8°C).

# Supreme Court Upholds Law Permitting Assisted Suicide

By Linda Greenhouse

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

The Supreme Court removed an obstacle on Tuesday to state efforts to authorize physician-assisted suicide, ruling 6-3 that John Ashcroft, the former attorney general, acted without legal authority five years ago when he threw the federal government's weight against the Death With Dignity Act in Oregon.

With the new chief justice, John G. Roberts Jr., in dissent, the decision removed a major obstacle to state initiatives like the one in Oregon, which has the only assisted-suicide law in the country.

Justice Anthony M. Kennedy's majority opinion did not say that Congress could not act to block such laws, only that it had not given the attorney general the "extraordinary authority" that Ashcroft claimed when he threatened Oregon doctors who followed the state law with losing their federal prescription-writing privileges.

While the court's decision was based on standard principles of administrative law, and not on the Constitution, it was clearly influenced by the majority's view that the regulation of

medical practice belonged, as a general matter, to the states. Ashcroft acted contrary to "the background principles of our federal system," Kennedy said in his 28-page opinion.

The court was clearly aware that it was venturing into "an earnest and profound debate," as Kennedy noted, quoting from the court's 1997 opinion in an assisted-suicide case.

In that case, *Washington v. Glucksberg*, the court said that the Constitution did not convey a right to assistance in dying, but that states were free to experiment with the issue. "The dispute before us," Kennedy said, "is in part a product of this political and moral debate."

The decision on Tuesday upheld rulings by two lower federal courts. Ashcroft, while attorney general, appealed to the Supreme Court in November 2004. His successor, Alberto R. Gonzales, embraced his position and pursued the appeal after the justices agreed last February to hear the case.

Roberts did not write a dissenting opinion of his own, instead signing a dissent written by Justice Antonin Scalia. Justice Clarence Thomas also wrote a dissenting opinion, in which

he said it was "perplexing to say the least" to find the court interpreting federal drug law narrowly in this instance when only months ago, it had upheld broad federal authority to prevent states from authorizing the use of marijuana for medical purposes.

Oregon voters approved the Death With Dignity Act in 1994 and reaffirmed it 1997. The law says that doctors who follow specific procedures may prescribe lethal doses of federally regulated medications to help their mentally competent, terminally ill patients end their lives. Through 2004, 325 people had obtained the lethal prescriptions, and 208 had used them.

When the Oregon measure took effect, Ashcroft was a senator from Missouri. Along with other members of Congress, he asked the Clinton administration to move to block the law.

Attorney General Janet Reno refused, writing a letter to Congress in June 1998 to say she had no authority to act because there was no evidence that Congress "intended to displace the states as the primary regulators of the medical profession." Ashcroft then co-sponsored a bill to give the government this authority, but it did not pass.

## GOP Leaders Propose Overhaul Of Rules on Lobbying Activities

By Carl Hulse

THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

House Republican leaders on Tuesday laid out a proposal to rewrite House rules governing lobbying as they moved to contain the political damage from an election-year scandal over undue influence and access afforded to lobbyists.

In the first of a series of competing packages of legislation, House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert called for a ban on congressional travel undertaken by outside groups, tougher restrictions on gifts and favors and the elimination of privileges for lawmakers-turned-lobbyists in response to three bribery and corruption convictions that have reached into the House. Inquiries related to those criminal acts are ongoing.

Congressional Democrats plan to issue their own overhaul plan

Wednesday and Senate Republicans are preparing one as well in a game of one-upsmanship touched off by guilty pleas to corruption charges by high-powered lobbyist Jack Abramoff and an associate and a House Republican's admission to taking bribes.

The House and Senate are responsible for setting the rules that apply to each chamber but in the past have enacted these types of reforms through a combination of rules changes and legislation to give them the force of law.

Though the plans differ, all take aim at the opportunities available to lobbyists to provide lawmakers with benefits such as luxury travel, expensive meals, scarce tickets to entertainment events, fund-raising help, contributions to pet causes and other little-scrutinized forms of financial and political support.

"I think members can probably function very well in this town without having to go out to lunch with a lobbyist or to dinner with a lobbyist," said Hastert. "They can pay for it for themselves."

Democrats plan to push ahead with their own proposals, saying they are skeptical the Republicans who control the House and Senate will be able to clean up a system they have presided over. "It is like asking John Gotti to do what he can to clean up organized crime," said Senator Harry Reid of Nevada, the Democratic leader.

Like the other plans, the overhaul by Congressional Democrats would double to two years the time before a former lawmaker or senior aide could lobby Congress. Congressional Democrats would institute new quarterly lobbying reports with extensive new requirements for disclosure.

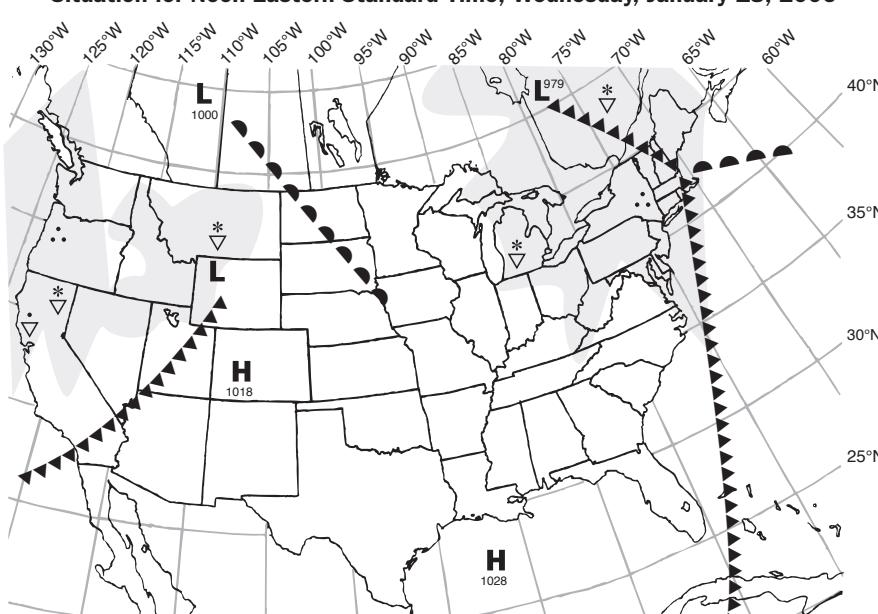
## WEATHER

### A Windy Wednesday Starts A Warm Weekend

By Angela Zalucha

STAFF METEOROLOGIST

#### Situation for Noon Eastern Standard Time, Wednesday, January 18, 2006



| Weather Systems |               | Weather Fronts |            | Precipitation Symbols |          | Other Symbols |              |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|------------|-----------------------|----------|---------------|--------------|
| H               | High Pressure | - - -          | Trough     | *                     | Snow     |               | Fog          |
| L               | Low Pressure  | — — —          | Warm Front | ▽                     | Rain     |               | Thunderstorm |
| §               | Hurricane     | ▲▲▲▲           | Cold Front | •                     | Light    | •             | Haze         |
|                 |               |                | ▲▲▲▲       | **                    | Moderate | ..            |              |
|                 |               |                | ▲▲▲▲       | Heavy                 | Heavy    | ...           |              |
|                 |               |                |            |                       |          |               |              |

| Weather Systems |               | Weather Fronts |            | Precipitation Symbols |          | Other Symbols |              |
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|                 |               | ▲▲▲▲           | ▲▲▲▲       | **                    | Moderate | ..            |              |
|                 |               |                | ▲▲▲▲       | Heavy                 | Heavy    | ...           |              |
|                 |               |                |            |                       |          |               |              |

| Weather Systems |               | Weather Fronts |            | Precipitation Symbols |          | Other Symbols |              |
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|                 |               | ▲▲▲▲           | ▲▲▲▲       | **                    | Moderate | ..            |              |
|                 |               |                | ▲▲▲▲       | Heavy                 | Heavy    | ...           |              |
|                 |               |                |            |                       |          |               |              |

Compiled by MIT Meteorology Staff and *The Tech*

# SEC to Require More Disclosure Of Sr. Executive Pay Packages

By Stephen Labaton  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON

The Securities and Exchange Commission voted unanimously on Tuesday to overhaul the way companies report their pay packages for senior executives, a move that is expected to lead to greater disclosure but not to any significant decline in executive compensation.

The proposal — the biggest change in this area in more than a dozen years — is the first major rule suggested by the commission's new chairman, Christopher Cox. SEC officials said it would be adopted in a few months, after a few details were sorted out. It is expected to go into force for the 2007 proxy season.

The move comes after a series of corporate scandals at the New York Stock Exchange and Tyco International, among others, that drew criticism over excessive pay.

In 1992, when the five-member commission first addressed executive pay issues, it sought to require greater disclosure as an antidote to excessive pay. But in the intervening years, many boards have come

up with partially or completely hidden benefits for top executives, ranging from paying their taxes to letting them use corporate jets for personal reasons.

"Simply put, our rules are out of date," Cox said at a commission meeting. But Cox emphasized that the agency did not intend to produce rules that forced changes in executive pay scales, but to make them more apparent to investors.

"It's about wage clarity, not wage controls," he said. "By improving the total mix of information available to the marketplace, we can help shareholders and compensation committees of boards of directors to assess the information themselves, and reach their own conclusions."

In recent years the commission has accused several companies, including General Electric, Tyco International and the Walt Disney Co., of failing to adequately describe significant payments and benefits to top executives. Just as the accounting scandals prompted Congress and the regulators to adopt new rules to invigorate audit committees of directors, the proposal on executive pay is

meant to prompt compensation committees to be more exacting.

At the same time, large institutional investors, like pension funds, have been raising more questions about the compensation of executives at companies where they own stock. The pay of the average worker has remained almost flat since 1990 at \$27,000, adjusted for inflation, while average chief executive pay has risen to \$11.8 million from \$2.82 million, representing a ratio of more than 400 to 1, according to figures from United for a Fair Economy and the Institute for Policy Studies.

The proposed rules would for the first time require public companies to provide a figure of total compensation, including significant perks, stock options and retirement benefits for the chief executive, the chief financial officer and three other top-paid officers, as well as all directors.

It is intended to prod companies into providing greater justification for pay packages, retirement plans, severance agreements and so-called golden parachutes — large payments to executives when the control of a company changes hands.

## Mass. Speaker Hits Mitt Romney On Slow Economic Recovery, Jobs

By Scott Helman  
THE BOSTON GLOBE

Massachusetts House Speaker Salvatore F. DiMasi blasted Governor Mitt Romney Tuesday, on the eve of the governor's final State of the State address, saying that Romney has failed to deliver on his promise to attract jobs to Massachusetts.

DiMasi criticized Romney for the slow pace of economic recovery during his administration and said he hoped the governor would use Wednesday night's speech to talk about what the state can do better.

"He made us a promise when he first came in, that he wanted to create jobs here in Massachusetts," DiMasi told reporters after a news conference celebrating new tax incentives for the film industry. "We need to get the economy back. We want to hear from Romney to find out why we haven't created those jobs."

When asked if Romney, who won't seek reelection this fall, will be able to act effectively on the issue in his final year, DiMasi said, "Well, I'd like to hear what did he do when he was here and why didn't it work and what does he suggest now that

he's leaving?"

By November, Massachusetts had about 20,000 fewer payroll jobs than it had when Romney took office in January 2003, according to the most recent state employment figures. The state is down 171,000 jobs since the number of jobs peaked in February 2001.

As he did Friday at the annual conference of the Massachusetts Municipal Association, Romney often says that the state has added more than 35,000 jobs since the low point in January 2004. But there are signs that the trend may not endure: Massachusetts lost about 13,000 jobs from July to November.

In addition to being a concern in the Bay State, a weak economy could be a political liability for Romney as he looks to trade on his successes as governor in a possible national campaign. Romney, a former corporate chief executive, came to office saying he would be a salesman who would pitch Massachusetts to companies, but Democrats have attacked him for using the state as a target of political jokes before out-of-state Republican audiences.

Romney acknowledges that he is not satisfied with the pace of job creation, but he paints the economy in a positive light and says his administration has turned deficits into surpluses.

"When Governor Romney came into office, the state was losing jobs by the thousands every month," said Romney communications director Eric Fehrnstrom. "Today we are adding jobs, and the unemployment rate is almost a full point lower [than] it was when we took office. But we have more work to do."

The unemployment rate when Romney took office was 5.7 percent, compared to 5.8 percent nationally. By November, it was 4.9 percent, compared to 5 percent nationally.

Fehrnstrom said that economic growth has been modest and that significant impediments remain, notably the high cost of housing. He called on the Legislature to pass the economic stimulus plan that Romney filed almost a year ago, which proposed, among other things, a cut in the unemployment insurance rate and new funding to attract companies to Massachusetts.

## New Orleans Agrees to Notifications Before Demolishing Ruined Buildings

By Adam Nossiter  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

NEW ORLEANS

A federal judge on Tuesday approved a settlement in a lawsuit over the first demolitions of homes ruined by Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, after city officials agreed to provide advance notice to homeowners.

The settlement means that the city could begin demolishing ruined houses — a deeply emotional and symbolic act here — within a few weeks.

A group of advocates for improved housing in damaged neighborhoods had filed suit against the city in December, demanding that homeowners be notified before any demolitions began. The group dropped its lawsuit with the city's agreement to provide that notification, and on Tuesday Judge Martin L.C. Feldman of U.S. District Court signed an order dismissing it.

The standoff had become the first symbolic confrontation over the redevelopment push here, with officials moving to clear rubble from the most heavily damaged area — the Lower Ninth Ward — and community advo-

cates resisting them, in the name of local residents. Houses, or remains of houses, were set to be bulldozed with no warning to the owners, the advocates charged; officials countered that they simply wanted to clear piles of debris that posed safety hazards.

A neighborhood demonstration, news conferences and a court challenge over the demolitions had filled the first weeks of the new year, initial salvos in what is shaping up as a contention-filled effort to transform this limping city. Advocates had engineered a confrontation with bulldozers earlier this month in an area where many homes are no more than piles of rubble, insisting that residents be given a chance to pick through them for their possessions.

The fight ended without fanfare, however, in what the judge said Tuesday was a compromise. For 123 of the most heavily damaged structures, almost all in the Lower Ninth Ward, New Orleans officials have agreed to give seven to 10 days notice before bulldozing. The city will publish an advertisement over three days in the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* listing

the addresses of the affected properties, will post a warning on its Web site and will try to contact the owners by mail.

The warning will specify that officials intend to "demolish or haul away" the structure or its remains. Owners have a right to challenge the demolitions during the seven- to 10-day window.

For 1,900 other houses less seriously damaged, but still considered in imminent danger of collapse, the city will give 30 days' notice.

The fight was touched off late last year after a New Orleans official, Greg Meffert, told reporters 2,500 homes were to be demolished. Activists immediately sued, saying New Orleans had made no effort to contact anybody on the list. Officials, in turn, responded with various explanations, blaming the Federal Emergency Management Agency on the one hand for at first not providing lists of displaced residents, and saying on the other that some houses were so battered — particularly those near the levee break on the Industrial Canal — that it was impossible to determine their addresses.

## Israeli Ready for Peace Talks If Palestinians Disarm Hamas

By Greg Myre  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

JERUSALEM

Israel's acting prime minister, Ehud Olmert, said Tuesday that he would be willing to restart peace talks with the Palestinians if they met the longstanding Israeli demand to break up armed factions.

But Palestinian elections on Jan. 25 could further complicate peace efforts because the Islamic faction Hamas is expected to do well and might become part of the Palestinian government.

Hamas, which has carried out many bombings and other attacks against Israel, says it will not lay down its weapons after the election, and Israel insists it will not deal with Hamas, which Israel labels terrorist.

Still, Olmert said he hoped the Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas, would disarm the factions, which could lead to renewed peace talks after the Palestinian balloting this month and Israeli elections in March. "I hope that based on the results of their elections, and after that the results of our elections, I will be able to enter negotiations," Olmert said.

Earlier this week, Abbas said he was prepared to deal with Olmert "without any preconditions." Israeli and Palestinian officials hold periodic contacts, but negotiations broke down shortly after the Palestinian uprising began in September 2000.

Both sides say they are committed to the so-called road map, the peace plan that has stalled since it was introduced in 2003. The plan's initial steps call for the Palestinians to dismantle armed groups, and for Israel to take down unauthorized settlement outposts.

In the days immediately after Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's stroke on Jan. 4, Olmert maintained a relatively low profile and emphasized that he was only filling in. But with Sharon in a coma for the past 13 days, and showing no significant signs of recovery, Olmert is speaking out on issues.

## Al Jazeera Shows Kidnapped U.S. Journalist

By Robert F. Worth  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

BAGHDAD, IRAQ

Looking pale and tired, a kidnapped American reporter, Jill Carroll, appeared in a silent videotape broadcast Tuesday by Al Jazeera television. The network said her captors had threatened to kill her if the United States does not release all women held prisoner in Iraq within 72 hours.

The tape showed Carroll, 28, speaking against a white background, her long dark hair parted in the center, but there was no sound. Al Jazeera said she had asked the kidnappers to have pity and release her.

No insurgent group has taken responsibility for kidnapping her on Jan. 7, but a still photograph from the videotape on the network's Web site showed the words "The Revenge Brigade." The group is not known to have taken hostages in the past.

Carroll, a freelance reporter who was working primarily for *The Christian Science Monitor*, was abducted in a dangerous part of western Baghdad. She had just left the office of Adnan Dulaimi, a Sunni Arab political leader, when gunmen intercepted her car, aiming pistols at the driver and pulling him out.

In a statement on the *Monitor*'s Web site, her family wrote: "Jill is an innocent journalist, and we respectfully ask that you please show her mercy and allow her to return home to her mother, sister and family. Jill is a kind person whose love for Iraq and the Iraqi people are evident in her articles."

The editor of *The Monitor*, Richard C. Bergenheim, also posted an appeal for her release.

Carroll, who grew up in Michigan and speaks some Arabic, had been reporting in the Middle East since late 2002, mostly in Iraq.

More than 400 foreigners and at least 36 journalists have been kidnapped in Iraq since 2003, along with thousands of Iraqis.

## Raid on Internet Company Sends Japanese Shares Down

By Martin Fackler  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

TOKYO

An investigation of Livedoor, a popular Internet-portal company, caused a decline in Japanese stock markets Tuesday, as it also raised questions about the nation's tolerance for a more freewheeling version of capitalism.

The inquiry into possible securities violations began Monday night, when Tokyo prosecutors raided the offices of Livedoor and the home of its maverick chief executive, Takafumi Horie.

Horie, a boyish 33-year-old fond of T-shirts and Ferraris, has become a symbol of a new Japanese entrepreneur, flouting the unwritten rules of the nation's clubby corporate world.

More than a dozen investigators marched into the two locations, both in the Roppongi Hills high-rise complex in central Tokyo that has become a favored haunt of rich Internet and financial entrepreneurs. Camera crews were waiting as the prosecutors arrived, apparently tipped off about the raids, which took place in time for nightly news broadcasts.

In response to the raids, the benchmark Nikkei 225-stock index dropped 2.8 percent Tuesday, to 15,805.95, its biggest decline since May 10, 2004.

The sharpest sell-off was in Internet-related stocks, in response to what the news media called the "Livedoor shock." Livedoor led the declines, falling 14.4 percent, to 596 yen (\$5.16).

Another Internet company, Softbank, lost 11.1 percent, to 3,840 yen (\$33.27). Yahoo Japan dropped 8.4 percent, to 164,000 yen (\$1,420.92), and Rakuten, which runs a popular online shopping mall, sank 12.1 percent, to 98,500 yen (\$853.47).

Prosecutors have not released any details about the suspected violations at Livedoor, but press reports in Japan have said authorities are investigating whether the company released false information to drive up the share price of a marketing subsidiary.

At a gathering with reporters Tuesday morning, Horie said the company was conducting an internal investigation and vowed to press on with business despite the setback. "There is nothing particularly wrong with our company," he told reporters. "We want to keep expanding."

# OPINION



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# CAMPUS LIFE

## Imminent Collapse

### Ten Tech Traditions

By Bill Andrews

CAMPUS LIFE ASSOCIATE EDITOR

As many of you on campus are probably aware, the fabled Mystery Hunt took place last weekend. My congratulations to the winning team, which, I guess, solved the most puzzles, or whatever. I'm not really into all that kinda thing, y'see. The whole idea of devoting an entire weekend to solving puzzles, with nothing to show for it but the chance to write next year's puzzles doesn't really fit into my lazy lifestyle. But maybe it should.

I mean, it's an MIT tradition, right? Mystery Hunt, it's right up there with Bad Taste, or the AXO lip sync contest. But then, I've never really 'done' those events either. Perhaps I might as well try these things once, since, the way things are going, who knows if there'll be any traditions left in a few years? But how is one to tell the good traditions from the bad?

That's why I came up with this list of the top 10 MIT traditions, in order of when I thought of them. I'll include what I know or have heard about the event, if it's worth going to, and whatever else I think of. So without further ado:

#### Mystery Hunt

Like I said, a bunch of teams sit around in rooms on campus and try to solve puzzles. While the Zelda player in me likes the idea, the lazy bum in me rebels; plus I'm hardly ever in town for IAP (I am from Florida, after all). I've heard it can be fun, though, especially if you

don't take it all hard core serious and just enjoy yourself. Basically, it's up to you how much fun you have.

#### Bad Taste

A show put on by the Chorallaries making fun of all kinds of taboo stuff (religions, races, other a cappella groups...). Again, I've never gone, so I can't really judge, but I've heard it isn't that great. Sorry guys, maybe I've heard wrong, or it could be that waiting in line for days raises your expectations unfairly. But hey, I've always kinda sorta wanted to go, and this might just be the year, assuming I don't have anything better to do.

#### Pumpkin Drop

Every Halloween or so, the good folks at EC drop pumpkins off the roof of the Green Building. Maybe it doesn't sound so great, but it is quite entertaining, and very easy to get into (just show up). I recommend everyone see it at least once, and bring a date; nothing says romance like a pumpkin going "splaaat."

#### Tangerine/Orange Tours

Speaking of EC, these tours are the reasons half my friends are here @mit.edu, so if you've never gone on one you're really missing out. Loosely put, you start out with a bunch of youngsters (traditionally they've been for prefrosh and frosh, though I went on them for years) somewhere and head for Baker House.

Usually you never get there, but, as with life, the journey is more important than the destination. And unlike life, your safety is assured.

#### Spelunker's Tours

Like hard-core, more secretive orange tours. Alas, I've never taken part, but I understand that there's all kinds of interesting stops, and all the best hacking stories are saved for spelunkers. Unfortunately, they only occur once a year (like the other tours), shortly after orientation. You have to know the right people to know when and where to meet. In case you're wondering, I don't fall in that category.

#### Sodium Drop

Similar in spirit and physics to the pumpkin drop, only it's dropping a big block of sodium into the Charles River. In case you can't remember your 5.11X, sodium and water react violently, and just like a FOX special it's very entertaining. The only problem is it gets very crowded on the tiny Longfellow bridge, so if you wanna see the good stuff you'll have to show up pretty early. The boom, however, can be heard for miles.

#### Steer Roast

Dude. If I gotta explain Steer Roast, all hope is lost.

#### Spring Weekend

You know that time in April when things seem a little extra festive? That's spring week-

end. The highlight is usually some "big name" musical group performing, though for the last bunch of years the groups kinda sucked. Back in the day we'd get groups like Reel Big Fish, They Might Be Giants, Sugar Ray, Spin Doctors. The rest of the week's events are hazy for me, so they can't really be that traditional. Right now I can't recommend whether you should go, because I don't know who's playing.

#### Charm School

Do we still do charm school? According to MIT Google we do, and it's February 3 this year. I totally recommend going. Really, it's quite fun. In the past some newspapers stop by and do a soft news story on us (imagine, some MIT nerds trying to become charming, it's sooo cute!). I got my first doctorate from MIT in charm, so it has a special place in my heart.

#### Commencement

Sure it's kind of a lame tradition to include, but I wanted one more for an even ten. It seems that recently there's a tradition of boring/no-name commencement speakers, so that's that. I've never gone, but I hope to this year. I hear it's fun, but better to remember than to do; kinda like MIT.

So there you have it. Disclaimer, because I know how sensitive people get: these are all my opinions, and could very well be wrong. If I slighted your favorite tradition, relax: it's still IAP, after all.

## The Shopaholic Beaver

### (Get) Off My Back (Part 1 of a series of 3)

areas, and then explain myself a little.

#### High Sierra — Magnum

The Magnum gets points for looks right away, because mine was an awesome shade of green that had me at hello. The shape is weird, long vertically but not very deep front-to-back, which proved detrimental in the size category since once I put my laptop in, there wasn't room for more than a thin folder and one binder. All three bags had a clasp on the strap that holds the laptop, and it always gets in the way when I'm putting the laptop in. But once the laptop's in, it's well protected. The features are nice: a convenient cell phone holder on the shoulder strap, zippered pockets on both sides for a water bottle or small accessories, and a front pocket big enough to hold all my non-binder-sized junk. The straps were supremely well designed, The straps also featured a "suspension system," a piece of elastic material that connects the strap to the top of the bag near the shoulder, reducing stress there; at least I think that's how it works — I'm not Course 2. Padding on the straps and the back

I really wanted to like this bag, but the lack of space for carrying books and binders was a deal breaker.

#### High Sierra — Holmes

The Holmes is a high-end version of the Magnum, apparently. The black color I picked and the high-density material on the front panel made it look very professional. Extra compartments and bigger features, however, made the bag look much more bulky, a big minus for an everyday bag. And oddly, the cell phone pocket on the strap was removable, making it stick out too much. However despite the extra size, this pack still was not deep enough to hold more than one binder and my laptop! All the same comfort features on the straps were there, with the added benefit of straps across the chest and waist, which my poor shoulders appreciated, but the waist strap would hang out unattractively on both sides if you didn't use it. Improved features over the Magnum included better shaped side pockets and a larger front compartment. Additional features such as a music pocket for a CD player and CD's and a small felt-lined pocket for more delicate accessories like sunglasses were very nice, although

I couldn't see myself using the huge CD pocket in the age of MP3 players. Overall, the features weren't worth the extra price and bulk, since I still couldn't fit the important stuff.

#### High Sierra — Access

This looked the bulkiest of the three, and the light blue and grey color I picked ended up not looking very professional. It did have more room to fit all my stuff, but there were zippers and clasps and straps flying everywhere. Same comfort features as the Holmes, but the shoulder straps were not padded as well. Features include just one side pocket (fine, I only carry one water bottle anyway), a smaller front compartment but a second middle compartment for larger accessories, a carabiner and loops to attach stuff to the front compartment, an MP3 player pocket in front, an even nicer padded handle on top (I love cushy padding), and the same bulky, detachable cell phone holder on the strap. All nice features, but this bag is just too heavy-duty for my everyday life.

So there's my take on the High Sierra line. If you have a smaller laptop, they had some smaller bags that might be worth a try. My quest continues next week!

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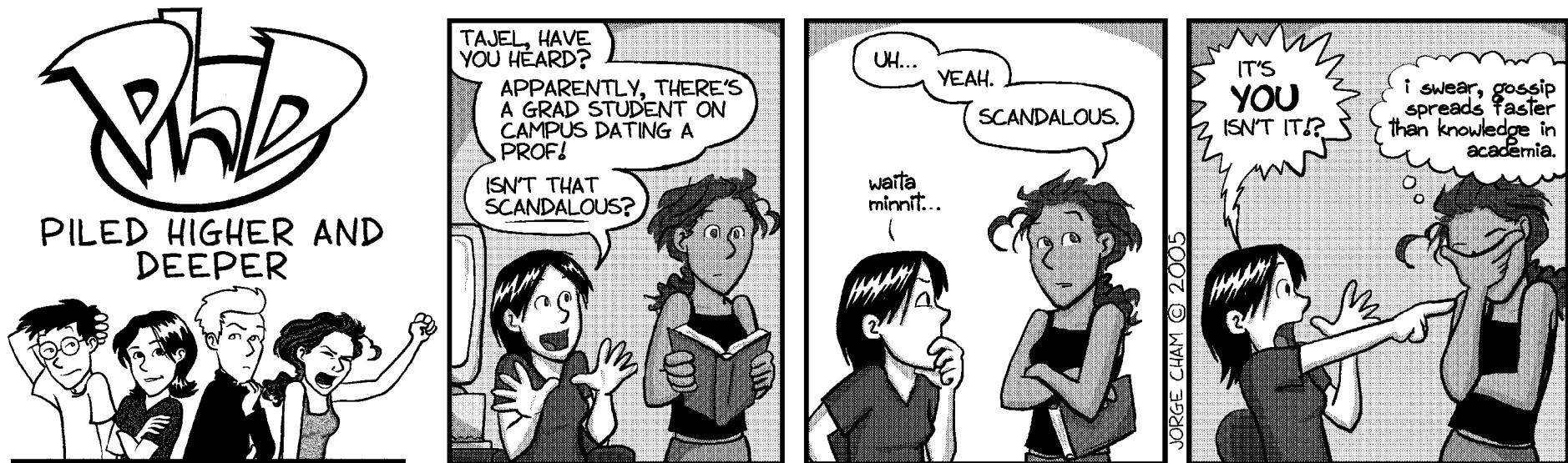
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by Emezie Okorafor



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## Crossword Puzzle

Solution, page 15

**SU|DO|KU**

Puzzles by Pappocom

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that every column, row, and 3 by 3 grid contain exactly one of each of the digits 1 through 9.

Solution, tips, and computer program at <http://www.sudoku.com>;  
see also solution, page 17.

## MACROEPIDEMIOLOGY

BE.102

TR 3-4:30 56-180

**Perspective for discovering the genes, environmental factors and cellular processes that cause or accelerate common human diseases. Mathematical, cellular and genetic models of carcinogenesis and atherogenesis in humans. Analysis of historical records and family risk data. New in 2006: role of amitotic forms of nuclei that appear to drive growth and differentiation in human tissues and tumors.**

See: <http://epidemiology.mit.edu> OCW BE.102 (2005)

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The Tech

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# Mystery Hunt 2006



Hundreds of enthusiastic puzzlers gathered for this year's annual Mystery Hunt, which lasted from 12:17 p.m. last Friday, Jan. 13 until 12:31 early Sunday morning. (clockwise from below)

Hordes of Mystery Hunters gather in 34-101 for the Mystery Hunt wrap-up, where Reid W. Barton '04 explained puzzle solutions, quirks of this year's hunt, and funny anecdotes.

Former Random Hall president Matthew S. Cain '02 introduces the Hunters to this year's hunt.

Mystery Hunt antagonist Professor Moriarty (Lael U. Odhner G) explains his evil plan to the Hunters during the opening ceremony, finishing his Lobby 7 presentation with a challenge to upset his diabolical scheme.

A Mystery Hunt team named after the late James "Big Jimmy" E. Roberts, a well-liked East Campus night guard, brought a cardboard cutout to the opening ceremony.

Katherine Reid '03 serves "champagne" — ginger ale — to complement the opening ceremony's request for formal attire.

*Photography by Omari Stephens*



## ARTS

## ART REVIEW

# Behind the Scenes: Museum Style

## Museum of Fine Arts Puts Mosaic Reconstruction Effort on Display

By W. Victoria Lee

STAFF WRITER

Rescuing a Roman Mosaic

Museum of Fine Arts

Through March 15

465 Huntington Ave., Boston

**O**nce upon a time, there was a magnificent Roman villa in the ancient city of Antioch. Situated in what is today southeastern Turkey, the grand dwelling was known as the House of the Drinking Contest. Much like its formerly inebriated occupants, the villa, along with its courtyards and fountains, has become a vague memory of the past. However, one of its mosaic floors has just begun a second life at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

The mosaic includes a colorful mix of Cupids, dolphins, and fish made out of small clay or limestone pieces known as tesserae (tessera, tesserae, for you Latin buffs), nothing too extraordinary compared to other Roman mosaics from the same time period. What distinguishes the exhibit, however, is the fact that this particular piece of Roman mosaic floor is being restored, reconstructed, and conserved right in front of our eyes. On the second floor of the Museum in the Classical Gallery, there is a room with large glass windows, allowing visitors to peek into the studio and watch the conservators at work.

We've all seen how cartoon characters are animated, ship liners split, and aliens created in our favorite movies on ... television screens. How about a "Behind the Scene,

Live, Museum Style" show instead of those DVD "Special Features"?

The journey this art took to the MFA was a long and circuitous one. Although the floor was excavated in the 1930s, literally uprooted from a third-century home overlooking the Mediterranean, it sat idly in a crate at the Dumbarton Oaks Research Center in Washington D.C. for over 60 years, unseen by either scholars or the public. In 2002, the Museum of Fine Arts officially acquired the mosaic floor, and a series of cosmetic surgeries was planned to restore and conserve the ancient piece.

To transport the mosaic floor from its original site to the U.S., the archaeologists had to apply a heavy concrete backing reinforced with iron bars and chick wires that amounted to more than 6,000 pounds. Not only was this old-fashioned backing cumbersome, it also deteriorated and became unstable. The conservators at the MFA have since replaced it with a new support, and the entire complicated, laborious process is documented in a succinct video playing near the studio.

Although the backing has been replaced, much work remains. The conservators are in the process of cleaning the surface of the mosaic and reconstructing broken parts by deducing the missing shapes from the remaining patterns, a project that was started early last year and is slated to be completed in March. Catch the restoration process live at the MFA this January. For more information, visit <http://www.mfa.org>.

## FILM REVIEW ★★★★

# 'Brokeback' Hits the Bull's Eye

## Ledger and Gyllenhaal Powerfully Portray Star-crossed Lovers

By Andrew Guerra

STAFF WRITER

Brokeback Mountain

Directed by Ang Lee

Written by Annie Proulx, Larry McMurtry,

Diana Ossana

Starring Heath Ledger, Jake Gyllenhaal,

Michelle Williams, Anne Hathaway

Rated R

Now playing

**H**ollywood seems incapable of letting two people simply fall in love. Poor Bridget Jones was plagued by Herculean bouts of neuroticism and, in the sequel, a drug trafficking charge. "Love, Actually" featured a dizzying array of complications ranging from language barriers to the unfortunate circumstance of being married to one's best friend. Jack and Rose triumphed over social conventions and a sinking ship only to be torn apart by cold water. In this sense, "Brokeback Mountain" follows faithfully in the footsteps of its Hollywood love story predecessors. All that stand between Ennis and Jack are the remaining characters in the film.

"Brokeback Mountain" is based on a short story written by Annie Proulx and originally published in "The New Yorker" in 1997. The film tells the story of two young ranchers, Ennis Del Mar (Heath Ledger) and Jack Twist (Jake Gyllenhaal) who meet while herding sheep during the summer of 1963 on the titular mountain in Wyoming. As the summer progresses, so does the relationship between the two men. Initially only friends, it soon becomes clear that the two have fallen in love, even if they don't realize it themselves.

When the summer ends, however, the two go their separate ways. Ennis returns to his fiancée, Alma (Michelle Williams), has two daughters, and finds work at various ranches in Wyoming. Jack moves down to Texas and rides bulls on the rodeo circuit until he catches the eye of Lureen (Anne Hathaway), whom he marries after the couple has a son. Four years pass; when Jack sends Ennis a postcard, they begin to meet up for intentionally fruitless fishing expeditions.

Yet the tone of the film does depart strongly from the majority of Hollywood love sto-

ries that have come before. The entire film has a gritty realism to it, a sense of Spartan beauty and simplicity that matches the source material perfectly. The cinematography captures the severity of the Wyoming landscape, at once awe-inspiring and abrasive, beautiful and brutal. The film's score furthers this effect, as vast stretches of silence are broken by simple acoustic guitar playing and occasional period-appropriate country western songs.

Finally, Ang Lee's direction combines these elements into a cohesive whole, lingering on certain shots for emphasis or control of the pace of the film. This gritty realism both repudiates the idea that relationships such as the one between Jack and

Ennis didn't exist simply because they were ignored by society, and allows for an honest portrayal of the relationship. Lee avoids cliché techniques to evoke sentimentality such as sudden swells of strings or scenes where one character is seen through the loving eyes of the other. Instead, the audience is trusted to fall in love with Ennis and Jack as the characters fall in love with each other, and though Lee takes a risk, it pays off as the film subtly and genuinely evokes emotion instead of pandering to extract tears.

Naturally, the most important aspect of "Brokeback Mountain" is the love story itself. It falls to Ledger and Gyllenhaal to convincingly depict the relationship between their characters, and despite some reservations, they both manage to pull off believable



In Ang Lee's "Brokeback Mountain," Ennis Del Mar (Heath Ledger) and Jack Twist (Jake Gyllenhaal) play Wyoming cowboys who fall in love.

portrayals. Ledger in particular, has a somewhat less impressive acting history, but manages to fill out the most demanding character in the film, acquitted himself magnificently in some later scenes. The complexity of the relationship is also depicted well, as the film does not neglect to reveal the damage that Jack and Ennis' relationship does to their marriages. Lureen retreats further into herself as the film progresses, turning into a bitter, hollow parody of the vivacious woman she was when she met Jack. In contrast, Alma seems incapable or unwilling to suffer silently, her rage and misery coming to the surface. The relationships between the characters expose the multiple meanings of fidelity both in regard to the two men and to their marriages. In addition, traditional concepts of masculinity

are examined through the actions of the two men compared to those of other male characters in the film. The men's relationship is also subtly explored through symbolism; "Brokeback Mountain" itself is a symbol of the Eden that Jack and Ennis once had, and a pair of mementos that resurface at the end of the film illustrate beautifully the nature and depth of the relationship between the two.

"Brokeback Mountain" has been called revolutionary for being a mainstream movie about cowboys who fall in love with each other, but ironically, the story is in truth incredibly simple. At its heart "Brokeback Mountain" is a beautifully crafted film that tells a story strikingly similar to some of the oldest tales of love in our society.

## RESTAURANT REVIEW

# Figs Offers Great Italian With an American Flair

## Despite Dodgy Service, Restaurant Reflects The Talent of Founder Todd English

By Jillian Berry

STAFF WRITER

Figs

42 Charles St.

Boston, MA 02114

(617) 742-3447

**F**igs, a local restaurant chain started by famed Boston chef Todd English, offers locations in Boston, Charlestown, and Wellesley, easily accessible via public transportation. Figs can best be described as a gourmet Bertucci's with a more upscale, American flair. The focus is on fresh salads (\$6-\$10), pasta dishes (\$10-\$20), and those famous brick oven pizzas (\$10-\$20).

First, the food. To begin, we were served two varieties of complimentary bread paired with oil. The bread was dense and moist, and tasted great with the oil, but it would have been even better fresh and warm.

On my visit, I shared a chicken risotto (\$9.95) and an Isabelle pizza (\$17). The chicken risotto was served with tomatoes and escarole in a light combination of tomato juice, chicken broth, and oil. The leafy escarole was perfectly complemented by freshly grated Parmesan cheese, the risotto was moist and flavorful without being mushy or hard, and the chicken was wonderfully tender. The Isabelle pizza, which is topped with ham, provolone, asparagus, and sweet onions, was generous and could easily be split between two or three people. The salty ham and sweet onions made for a tasty combination, and the thin crust only added to the delicious pizza.

After the main course, my guest had a cappuccino (\$2.50), which was more American in flavor than Italian. The large serving of espresso was weak and watery, and the froth was equally disappointing. For dessert, I had a s'more (\$6.95), which certainly had an authentic taste that reminded me of toasting marshmallows over a fire. The chocolate had a consistency reminiscent of pudding, a little unusual, but very flavorful.

While the food was excellent on the whole, the environment and service were not. My breath fogged in the bathroom, and I was definitely not the only one wearing a coat during my meal. Additionally, the service was slow, and the waitress often seemed more intent on chatting with her coworkers than actually working. Finally, there was a serious lack of communication among the staff: as we were waiting for dessert, we were offered bread twice.

In general, the food was worth the price, but the service could use some immediate help.

## FILM REVIEW ★★

# A Grand Old Time

## 'The Producers' is Reminiscent of Brooks' Golden Past

**By William Andrews**

STAFF WRITER

*The Producers*

Directed by Susan Stroman

Starring Nathan Lane, Matthew Broderick,

Uma Thurman

Rated PG-13

In Theaters Now

In recent years, a trend has started in Hollywood. It all began with a plucky little movie called "Moulin Rouge," and when "Chicago" won Best Picture the next year, there was no doubt that musicals were once more cool. "The Producers," Mel Brooks' first movie in 10 years, keeps that going.

The story, of course, is legendary. Max Bialystock is a has-been Broadway producer at the pits of his downfall; Leo Bloom is the buttoned-down accountant who inadvertently hatches a scheme for making millions of dollars. If the producers of a show ensure that it will be a flop, they can keep all the investors' money not already spent, since no one expects returns on a closed show. After some crazy rigmarole, the two decide to do it, vowing to find the worst script, the worst director, and the worst actors to ensure they can keep the \$2 million they'll raise.

But for once, the story isn't the main issue here. As any bona fide nerd can tell you, the

movie is based on a musical play which was itself based on a classic Mel Brooks movie, all of the same name, and the same plot. But the vast majority of the songs were written by Mel Brooks for the show only recently, except, of course, "Springtime for Hitler," which was in the original. Like I said though, we should all know that already.

So what don't we know? Well, for starters, this movie rocks! It's hilarious, making me long for the days before my birth when Brooks had a new movie out every couple of years. Nathan Lane as Max and Matthew Broderick as Leo are sure fits, probably because they originated the Broadway roles. They both seem to exult in their characters, making already funny lines hilarious, and already crazy situations even crazier. In fact, they both seem to be a little too into it, most likely slipping into their old (and too big for film) stage presences; try to contemplate, for instance, the fact that Broderick's Bloom makes Gene Wilder's seem subtle. It's not enough to detract from the experience, though, so I say enjoy all that extra bang for your buck.

The supporting cast of Uma Thurman, Will Ferrell, Roger Bart, and Gary Beach (whose Hitler alone is worth the admission price), was also great. While it seems that every character is zanier than the previous, it's good to see that they still know their places,

and never ham it up or steal the scene when they shouldn't. And let's not forget that Brooks nails the same two-second cameo he had the first time around.

The writing is excellent — expected jokes, unexpected jokes, weird jokes: this movie's full of all kinds of funny. And the songs! Oh, the songs. While not the most lyrical or complex of melodic structures, every single song has really clever lyrics (and not just Mancini clever, we're talking Cole Porter clever), fits the style of the scene, and is fun to listen to as well. At times sanguinely innocent, at others cheerfully self-aware ("why did you go camera right?"), they're always fun, and the whole cast knows it.

Since I didn't give it four stars I must have found something wrong, and it's this: for a lot of the time, it didn't feel like a film. It didn't feel like a Broadway show either, it felt like a film trying to remind you it was once a show. Maybe this was intentional, but I don't know



UNIVERSAL PICTURES  
Producers Max and Leo attempt to pull off a flop with "Springtime for Hitler" in "The Producers."

why. Sure, it's nice to give a nod to the film's history (and many other films and musicals, for that matter), but if it looks like you're actually using the show's sets when you have movie resources at your disposal, that's going a bit too far.

Still, I might see it again in a theater, and I know I'll see it when it comes to LSC. I mean, heck, there's hot girls, funny songs, goofy jokes, and not one but two flamboyantly flamboyant characters. What more could fans of musicals ask for?

## FILM REVIEW ★★

# Monkey Business

## Jackson's 'Rings' Follow-up Is Disturbing and Fails to Captivate

**By Nivair Gabriel**

ASSOCIATE ARTS EDITOR

Directed by Peter Jackson

Written by Fran Walsh, Philippa Boyens,

Peter Jackson

Based on the story by Merian C. Cooper and Edgar Wallace

Produced by Jan Blenkin, Philippa Boyens,

Carolynne Cunningham, Peter Jackson,

Fran Walsh

Starring Naomi Watts, Jack Black,

Adrien Brody

Universal Pictures

Rated PG-13

In Theaters Now

Thank goodness Adrien Brody is as enrapturing as he is.

Otherwise, I would never have gotten through the 187-minute piece of dreck that director Peter Jackson calls "King Kong." His remake of the 1930s movie icon was inauspicious to begin with: after the success of the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy, Jackson had a free pass to do any project he wanted, and he chose to retell the story of a big dumb ape and a blond bimbo.

The relationship between gorilla and girl is the only other thing that holds up the movie, which is unfortunate considering that the bond is not captivating at all. Every scene between the two characters, played by a computer-altered Andy Serkis and a real life Naomi Watts respectively, lasts about twenty minutes longer than necessary. Let's face it — it's pretty difficult for a giant monkey to emote. Gee whiz, that Watts chick sure is pretty, so pretty that no man or beast in the movie can resist her charms, but that's not quite enough of a revelation to justify an \$8 ticket and \$10 popcorn.

So the parts of the plot that don't focus on failed actress Ann Darrow (Watts) and her hairy young man? Well, there's the under-appreciated fanatic movie producer Carl Denham (Jack Black), the dorky and soulful yet deliciously ripped playwright Jack Driscoll (Adrien Brody), a ragtag crew with no clear motivation

or personality, the creepy island natives, and more computer-generated creatures than *Jurassic Park* and *Eight-Legged Freaks* combined.

The beginning of the movie is promising, as we survey a misty and colorized 30's-era New York City through the eyes of desperate vaudeville performer Darrow. She's down to her last penny and her theater has just been shut down — she announces in anguish that good things never last, but then that character development teaser is dropped and never to be spoken of again. Meanwhile, Denham needs a charming and gorgeous leading lady for his film, and about a hundred more pages from his writer. They all take off in a boat together, evading arrest from the producers who want Denham's movie canned. As soon as they're 10 feet out from the harbor, they're completely free, because policemen had no idea how to use boats at that time — but we'll let that one slide.

Once they're off, they're off: Denham reveals that his shooting location is the mysterious Skull Island, a technically undiscovered land that only exists on a scrawled map that he inexplicably possesses. Darrow and Driscoll do some excellent tongue-kissing, and the whole thing just heads straight on downhill from there.

The boat crew pretends to turn in the fugitives but then doesn't, and upon reaching the island they then pretend to abandon the moviemakers but actually don't. Jackson uses the same dizzying camerawork he used in "Lord of the Rings" to show everyone how scary all the skulls are, and when the creepy-looking island natives offer Darrow as sacrifice to the beast Kong, Watts's scream pierces the ear like a Nazgul's. The only difference is, millions of geeks cared about Frodo, irritating as he was; nobody cares about Darrow.

Except, of course, for the crew members of



UNIVERSAL STUDIOS  
Ann Darrow and Jack Driscoll cower from the dangers of Skull Island in Peter Jackson's remake of "King Kong."

the ship, who all take up arms lickety-split and venture straight back into a dangerous island. This is believable because ... she's blonde. That's it.

Then the real creature feature begins. What's worse than watching a half-hour battle between a gorilla and three dinosaurs? Cutting instantly to a half-hour battle between Adrien Brody, some giant cockroaches, and a

weird extra-slimy caterpillar with teeth. What's worse than both of those? The screenplay's pathetic literary allusions to Joseph Conrad's "Heart of Darkness," which lack both insight and relevance.

Despite all this focus on matter-over-mind, the look of the film is cheap and unimpressive. None of the shots were imaginative or awe-inspiring, and the beginning of the film has so many overdone close-ups a person could develop nausea. Even the gorgeous jungle is clunkily presented, taking away all the mystique of a beautiful and undiscovered land.

Jackson's team at WingNut Films, which captivated the world with "Lord of the Rings," seems convinced that it's okay to be that slow and narratively challenged in other movies. Unfortunately, it doesn't work here, and it's never going to work again. Though I appreciated seeing a heroine who wasn't entirely helpless or annoying, there was nothing else worthwhile about the script. Even the fabulous actors couldn't save the film, although they did enough to keep me from walking out.

Denham, who is either supposed to portray a morally ambiguous cautionary tale or a narrow-minded artist who redeems himself with his passion, gives everyone a good look at what Jack Black can accomplish in a serious role. Black is excellent, as are Watts and Brody, and the opening scenes where the principals meet each other are full of chemistry. Sadly, however, each carefully laid tidbit of conflict is lost in the mad rush to show off cool bits of CGI and horrify people.

I wasn't horrified so much as bored beyond belief. With the wow factor gone, the faults of the script and the presentation are laid bare. It was a failed project from the beginning, with pretty cinematography the highest one. The only beauty here was in Adrien Brody's brooding eyes and droopy nose, and that's not enough to make a movie great.

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## FILM REVIEW ★★★

# Party Like It's 1759

## Casanova a Pretty Movie With a Few Good Laughs

By William Andrews

STAFF WRITER

**Casanova**

Directed by Lasse Hallstrom

Starring Heath Ledger, Sienna Miller,

Jeremy Irons

Rated R

In Theaters Now

We all know the story of Casanova, the man legendary for the length and breadth of his sexual conquests. But how many of us know the story of Casanova, a romantic comedy about finding true love via mistaken identities, set in 18th century Venice?

Heath Ledger plays Casanova surprisingly sympathetically, showing emotion and pain while always remaining oh so smooth with the ladies. Indeed, Ledger's occasionally goofy charm reminded me of the ever-befuddled Hugh Grant, with the notable exception that Ledger can act. Nor was his the only exceptional performance. Jeremy Irons, who I can never quite imagine as anything other than Uncle Scar's embodied voice, was in fine form as Bishop Pucci, notorious Inquisitor and Casanova's nemesis. Who else could make torture and cruelty seem so refined? The last half star I gave this movie is pretty much just for him. The rest of the cast was all right too, but only that.

Set two and a half centuries ago, Casanova is rife with prettiness. Besides the actors themselves, the costumes were at times dazzling, the sets beautifully intricate, and the special effects (18th century Venice at night from a balloon) were nice too. While this movie used the ubiquitous "generic English accents = other foreign accents" rule that I've never understood, the illusion of another time and another place is still compelling.

Dispensing with the niceties, we now move on to the nitty-gritty: the story. I must say, I was taken in by the ad campaign calling it "Funny funny funny!" I thought to myself, "how nice, in this age of Narnian epics of Kongian proportions, a regular, funny movie." Sure, it would probably be a romantic comedy, but so what? And hey, this one's rated R, so who knows what we might see?

As it turned out, what I saw was a chick flick. Sure, it was a decent movie, and there was



BUENA VISTA PICTURES

**Casanova (Heath Ledger)** navigates the canals of Venice during yet another wild adventure.

cleavage as far as the eye could see thanks to fashion, but do not be fooled guys: total chick flick. And as for "Funny funny funny?" More like, "Funny." A typical joke?

Woman to Casanova: "I'll leave my window open for you, Casanova."

Casanova: "Alas, my dear, there are so many windows and so little time."

The crowd loved that line, and scanning my peers I saw why: couples as far as the eye could

see. Apparently, I'd stumbled into watching not only a chick flick, but the perfect date movie of the season.

When none of the previews look like movies I'd want to see, I thought I was in for it. As it turned out, though, I appreciated the movie more as it went on — the humor just needed to get some momentum going, as the second half was much funnier. The various mistaken identities and noms de plume became Shakespearian

in their intricacy, and almost screwball in their comedy.

By the movie's end I was happy I'd seen it, though I could've waited to see it at LSC or even on DVD. It's worth watching at least once; there are some good lines (especially the one about the Catholic Church), some good acting, and everything's pretty. Just make sure you see it with your favorite girl or boy. After all, Casanova wouldn't want it any other way.

## ON THE SCREEN

— BY THE TECH ARTS STAFF —

★★★★: Excellent  
★★★: Good  
★★: Average  
★: Poor

**Aeon Flux**  
Oscar-winning actress Charlize Theron plays Aeon, an assassin working for the Monic rebels against the harsh rule of the Gooldchids of Bregna, the last city on Earth. Loosely adapted from MTV animated shorts, the film offers fast-paced action and a fresh style, with idyllic gardens filled with razor blade grass and poison dart-shooting trees. But "Aeon Flux" is flawed beyond the bastardization of its source material, with clumsy voice-overs, plot compression, and shallow characters. (Andrew Guerra)

**Capote**  
For a movie about a brutal murder, this film pursues its subject, the relationship between a writer and a killer, in an eerily peaceful mood. Like the lonely house where the murder happened, Truman Capote, a writer for "The New Yorker," and Perry Ellis, a convicted murderer on death row, are emotionally distant, though they yearn for a connection. In what is unquestionably one of the best films of the year, we watch Capote struggle between his self-interested, manipulated goals as a writer and his honest love of a cold-blooded killer. (Beckett Sterner)

**Chicken Little**  
Chicken Little (Zach Braff) is a tiny chick who warns that the sky is falling down. If you expected something spectacular out of Disney without having animation guru Pixar by its side, you would be sadly mistaken. It may be entertaining for small children, but for everyone else, it will simply be a film with far too much cuteness and far too few funny jokes. (Yong-yi Zhu)

**The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe**  
C. S. Lewis wrote a story about the triumph of good over evil (and yes, the Second Coming and the importance of faith), and the loyalty of

four brothers and sisters to each other and their friends. Lucy Pevensie steps through a wardrobe of fur coats and finds herself in Narnia, a magical land with talking animals and mythic beasts, and a White Witch who's covered the land in eternal winter. But there's no need to look for religious underpinnings when the fantasy easily stands alone. Narnia is a wonderful escape within an escape; like the old professor who owns the wardrobe, I can't wait to go back. (Rosa Cao)

**Derailed**  
One easy message: don't ever cheat on your wife, or your life will fall apart. Clive Owen is Charles Shine, a business executive whose affair with Lucinda (Jennifer Aniston) makes him easy fodder for a blackmailer. Unfortunately, poor acting and zero chemistry result in a movie that is slow to engage and tough to believe. (Yong-yi Zhu)

**Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire**  
The beginning of Harry Potter's fourth year is punctuated by murder and hints of a dark plot that involves his own abduction at the hands of the most evil of wizards. Soon after arriving back at Hogwarts, Harry (Daniel Radcliffe) is shocked to find himself selected as a Triwizard Champion, competing in a perilous magical tournament. Director Mike Newell chooses from J. K. Rowling's marvelous source material and creates an enormously satisfying film that is delightful in its dangers and thrills. Easily the best film of the series to date, "Goblet of Fire" captures the essence of the novel without being burdened by the need to fulfill every written detail. (Kevin Der)

**Jarhead**  
At the beginning of this film, Jake Gyllenhaal sits on the toilet, Camus' "The Stranger" in one hand and a bottle of laxatives in the other. By the end, he's fought in the Gulf War, and he's woken up to the world. Sam Mendes' "Jarhead," though entertaining, fails to capture complex changes in its main character and falls short of

the high expectations thrust on it. (Kapil Amanath)

**Memoirs of a Geisha**  
A geisha is a woman who holds a powerful sexual allure by playing hardball in a game defined by men. The film, adapted from Arthur Golden's novel, follows a girl named Chiyo (adult played by Ziyi Zhang), who is sold from her home in a fishing village to become a geisha in Kyoto. As one who captivates men's hearts through grace and beauty, Chiyo lives her life as an ornament to the wealthy, but dreams of romantic love with the Chairman (Ken Watanabe). So idolized by Western culture, this struggle for romance is perhaps what makes a love story in the life of a geisha such a fascinating yet foreign tale. (Beckett Sterner)

**Pride and Prejudice**  
Much as a tender heart can be touched and transformed by love, so your moviegoing experience will be enchanted by the brilliance of Joe Wright's adaptation of Jane Austen's classic novel. Elizabeth Bennett (Keira Knightley) struggles to find love as a lower-class woman in early 19th century Britain. The adaptation is absolutely perfect for the big screen; everything about this film will dazzle you. (Yong-yi Zhu)

**Rent**  
Based on Jonathan Larson's rock musical, this film tells the story of three couples struggling to overcome many obstacles — drug addiction, AIDS, homelessness, and others. Flooding its audience with messages of love and things that get in its way, "Rent" inspires laughter, tears, and personal examination at a level few films can match. (Kenneth Roraback)

**Shopgirl**  
Mirabelle (Claire Danes) is a lonely artist and sales clerk at Saks Fifth Avenue who meets Jeremy (Jason Schwartzman), a goofy artist, and Ray (Steve Martin), a wealthy middle-aged man. This is a drama about life and romance,

and it is full of bittersweet challenges and decisions — it's not your typical chick flick with a happy ending. (Jillian Berry)

**The Squid and the Whale**  
One part comedy, one part touching drama, and one part gross-out, this film tells the tale of how two children choose between their parents as role models after their parents' divorce. Of course, if your father (Jeff Daniels) is hooking up with his 20-year-old student and your mother (Laura Linney) can't stop describing the list of affairs she's had, choosing your preferred role model can be a challenge. The Berkman's produce hilarious lines and moments, and there's something glorious about how firmly they march into the model of a dystopian family. (Beckett Sterner)

**Syriana**  
Writer and director Stephen Gaghan, who penned "Traffic," discusses the energy crisis and the war for oil in this new drama. Part of an ensemble cast, Bob Barnes (George Clooney) is a CIA operative in the Middle East who must protect U.S. interests in oil, but he starts to question his government's motives. Though Gaghan presents a convincing, albeit pessimistic world view, he does not provide an artistic vision. Ultimately more enjoyment comes after the final reel, from thinking about the questions that the film raises. (Kapil Amanath)

**Walk the Line**  
Drawing its material from Johnny Cash's autobiography, the film explores the musician's struggle with drug abuse, his relationship with his eventual wife June Carter, and his music. Joaquin Phoenix portrays Cash convincingly, and even does his own singing. Though it recalls past films like "Ray," the film is a fine portrayal of a legendary musician. (Brian Chase)

Compiled by Kevin Der and Jacqueline O'Connor

# SPORTS

## Men's Basketball Makes Strong Showing, Defeats Babson 72-50

By Albert Ni

STAFF WRITER

With a balanced effort, the MIT Men's Basketball team took a 72-50 victory over Babson College (5-9) on Saturday. The Engineers improved to 10-4, already matching their win total from the entire previous season.

Sometimes you can tell how a game went without even looking at the final score. It was other numbers that told the story of a game in which the Institute outlasted, out-defended, and simply outplayed its opponents.

Tech dominated the glass, out-rebounding its opponents 32-20. The team won the assists column 17-11, the blocks column 5-2, and the steals column 10-7, and committed 6 fewer turnovers in the game. Tech also capitalized on Babson foul trouble in both halves, and reached the line an astounding 26 more times than their opponents.

Regardless of the statistics, it certainly didn't hurt to have Michael W. D'Auria '06 leading the way as usual with 19 points. D'Auria had his worst shooting night of the season, connecting on only 4 of 13 shots from the floor. But the mark of a good offensive player is what he does when shots aren't falling, and D'Auria was able to connect on 10 of 14 free throws, as well as dish out a team-high 6 assists and grab 3 offensive rebounds, demonstrating once again why he is the primary catalyst of Tech's offense.

With its offense unable to get into a rhythm in the opening minutes of the game, Tech relied on a solid defensive effort to keep the score close. That same defensive intensity would carry the team for the entire game; it seemed like every time Babson tried to get a run going, an Engineer de-



DAVID TEMPLETON—THE TECH

**Sophomore Hamidou Soumara (center) reaches for the ball under MIT's basket during the second half of the MIT men's basketball team's 72-50 win over Babson College this past Saturday, Jan. 14.**

fender would come up with a steal or block.

Soon enough, the offense got rolling, and MIT's superior quickness led to multiple layups and fouls. Almost everyone was able to get into the act, with Philip E. Murray '06 contributing 14 points, and Daniel F. Kanamori '06 and rookie James M. Bartolotta '09 adding 9 points apiece. Hamidou Soumara '07 led the way with 11 re-

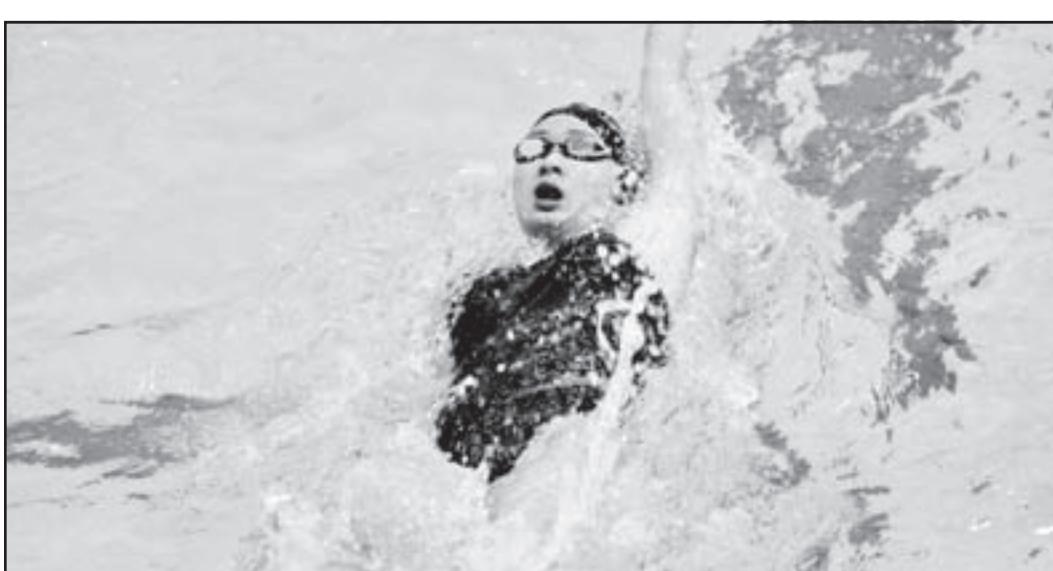
bounds, 7 of which were offensive.

All in all, the Tech players had plenty to be proud of in bringing their conference record to 3-1, tying for first in the NEWMAC. With their only conference defeat thus far being a 2-point loss to Worcester Polytechnic Institute, ranked 15th nationwide in Division III hoops, the Engineers look to be in good shape to contend for this year's conference title.



OMARI STEPHENS—THE TECH

**Matthew F. Bieniosek '09 hands off the baton to fellow freshman Jeremiah R. Cohen just ahead of the Bates College relay team during the 4x800-meter relay. The men's track team defeated Bates College and the Coast Guard Academy at a tri-meet held this past Saturday, Jan. 14 at Coast Guard.**



DAVID TEMPLETON—THE TECH

**Jennifer A. Chao '09 swims in the women's 100-meter backstroke event, in which she placed third with a time of 1:06.21. The MIT men's and women's swimming and diving teams hosted a meet this past Saturday, Jan. 14, against Colby College and Brandeis University.**

## Superbowl Prediction: Broncos vs. Seahawks

By Shreyes Seshasai

STAFF WRITER

The NFL Playoffs continue this Sunday with the NFC and AFC Championship games.

While the latest round of playoff

games provided more

**Column** excitement than the blowouts from Wild Card weekend, don't expect much more this Sunday. Here's what to look forward to next Sunday.

### AFC Championship Game: Steelers at Broncos

Sunday's match-up in the AFC Championship Game features two of the toughest teams in the league. The Denver Broncos, coming off a win over the Patriots, will look to hold the Steelers rushing duo of Willie Parker and Jerome Bettis in check while trying to find an answer to a Steelers defense that kept Peyton Manning and the Colts off balance last Sunday.

Both teams bring a strong defensive presence, especially against the run. But the game also features two of the better secondaries in the league. The Broncos have been led in that department by veterans Champ Bailey and John Lynch, while the Steelers' Troy Polamalu continues to make big plays.

On the offensive side of the ball, both teams rely on the rushing game to set the tempo, with Mike Anderson and Tatem Bell carrying the load for the Broncos. Establishing the running game early will be important to both teams as it will take the pressure off the quarterbacks. Broncos QB Jake Plummer is playing in his first League Championship game, while Steelers QB Ben Roethlisberger did almost nothing in the second half against the Colts except hand the ball off. Ironically, the game will come down to who can make the big plays in the passing game once the rush has eased up coverage in the secondary.

This game could also hinge on which team can control the ball and make the fewest turnovers. Denver has the fewest turnovers of any team in the league, and Plummer must continue to protect the ball and play smart football against a Steelers defense that will most certainly bring the same pressure that was so effective against Manning and the Colts.

Overall, I expect a tight, low-scoring game. While I'd love to pick the Steelers and see a No. 6 seed advance to the Superbowl for the first time, I

can't overlook the fact that Denver is undefeated at home this year. My pick: Denver over Pittsburgh.

### NFC Championship Game: Panthers at Seahawks

Seattle has clearly been the top team in the NFC all season, facing little challenge in the depleted NFC West. Running back and league MVP Shaun Alexander, coming off a record setting season, carried the load for the team throughout most of the season, but he suffered a concussion early in last Saturday's game against the Washington Redskins. Quarterback Matt Hasselbeck responded well, but he will have to continue to play efficiently to get the offense moving against the strong Panthers secondary.

The Panthers defense has been impressive all season, but it will face a stronger challenge against the Seahawks and Alexander. While the Panthers were able to hold Giants running back Tiki Barber in check in the Wild Card game, Alexander is a much stronger and smarter back, despite the concussion. Seattle also has more experience than both the Giants and Bears at the quarterback position, so look for coach Mike Holmgren to use Hasselbeck to test the Panthers more than the inexperienced Eli Manning and Rex Grossman did.

Seattle's defense faced little challenge last week against the weak Redskins offense, but this Sunday's game will be different. The Panthers' Jake Delhomme has done well against the Giants and Bears over the past two weeks, making few mistakes and throwing the football accurately.

But the offense took a big hit last week when its starting running back DeShaun Foster went down with an ankle injury. The Panthers will be forced to start Nick Goings, who just a few months ago was third on the depth chart behind Steven Davis and Foster. With Foster out of the game, the Seahawks will have to focus on shutting down All-Pro receiver Steve Smith, who leads the league in almost every receiving category. Smith has been able to find a way to get the ball thus far in the playoffs, don't expect that to change against the Seahawks.

Like Denver, Seattle hasn't lost a home game all season, and with Alexander in and Foster out, it will be hard for the Panthers to control the ball. Seattle has been able to dictate play all season, and I don't expect this game to be any different. My pick: Seattle over Carolina.

## UPCOMING HOME EVENTS

**Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2006**

Varsity Men's Ice Hockey vs. Bridgewater State College

7 p.m., Johnson Ice Rink

**Thursday, Jan. 19, 2006**

Varsity Men's Volleyball vs. Mount Ida College

7 p.m., Rockwell Cage

**Saturday, Jan. 21, 2006**

Varsity Men's Volleyball vs. Elms College

11 a.m., Rockwell Cage

Varsity Men's Swimming and Diving vs. Tufts University

1 p.m., Zesiger Sports

Varsity Women's Swimming and Diving vs. Tufts University

1 p.m., Zesiger Sports

Varsity Women's Gymnastics vs. University of Bridgeport and Ithaca College

1 p.m., du Pont Gymnasium

Varsity Women's Ice Hockey vs. St. Michael's College

3 p.m., Johnson Ice Rink

Varsity Men's Volleyball vs. Nazareth College

3 p.m., Rockwell Cage

Varsity Men's Ice Hockey vs. Western Connecticut State College

7 p.m., Johnson Ice Rink

**Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2006**

Varsity Women's Basketball vs. Wellesley College

5:30 p.m., Rockwell Cage

Varsity Men's Ice Hockey vs. Daniel Webster College

7 p.m., Johnson Ice Rink

Varsity Men's Basketball vs. Wheaton College

7:30 p.m., Rockwell Cage

# Plans for Lounge Delayed

*Glass Wall Proposal  
Now Being Reviewed*

**Dollar Bill**, from Page 1

pleted near the end of the Spring term, he said.

If the original plans move forward in the end, Martinez said he would accept them. "At this point I think I've done all I can," he said.

Gordon B. King of the department of facilities said construction to convert the space into a lounge will be extensive and probably take three to four months. The glass wall choice was designed to allow light coming in from Killian Court to reach the Infinite Corridor, he said. If the bill mural were removed, it would likely be memorialized with an etching on the glass, he said.

Walsh said one concern was that the glass wall would offer too much exposure, and ways to soften that would be considered.

The mural has been at the center of several hacks. When President Susan Hockfield took office, Washington's face was replaced with a painting of hers, and in 1993, as tuition neared \$10,000 a term, the facade was changed into a \$10,000 bill, according to the IHTFP Gallery. Most recently, a teardrop appeared under Washington's eye around finals week last month.

## Solution to the Crossword Puzzle

from page 7



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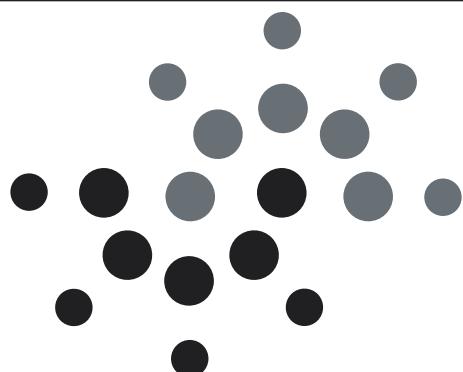
\*Please submit cover letter, resume with SAT scores, and transcript

**First Round Interviews:**

Date: Tuesday, February 7, 2006

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**The Grand Unified Theory of Physics**  
 by  
 Joseph M. Brown

**Discover the connection between the grand unified theory and the fine structure constant**

• The orbital speed of the lowest energy electron of a hydrogen atom in velocity of light units is obtained from balancing forces and using an angular momentum of  $\hbar$ .

$$\frac{e^2}{r^2} = \frac{mv^2}{r} \quad e^2 = (mv)r = \hbar v \quad \frac{e^2}{\hbar c} = \frac{v}{c} = \alpha$$

e, m v, r = electron charge, mass, velocity, orbital radius. c = speed of light

$\alpha$  = Fine Structure Constant

$$\alpha = \frac{e^2}{\hbar c} = 0.007\ 297\ 352\ 533(27)$$

where (27) is the uncertainty in the last two decimals.

• The fine structure constant also is the ratio of the electromagnetic force to the nuclear force - also known as the electromagnetic coupling constant.

• Everything in the grand unified theory of physics is derived from a Maxwell-Boltzmann gas in which the rms speed  $v_r$  is larger than the mean speed  $v_m$  by the ratio  $v_r / v_m = \sqrt{3\pi/8}$ .

• It is interesting that  $\left(\frac{v_r - v_m}{v_m}\right)^2 = (\sqrt{3\pi/8} - 1)^2 = 0.007\ 293\ 481\ 522$  which is 6 parts in 10,000 smaller than the fine structure constant.

For more information and to access the book, visit [www.physicsunifiedtheory.com](http://www.physicsunifiedtheory.com)

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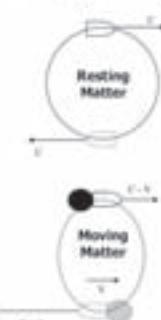
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**The Grand Unified  
 Theory of Physics**



Joseph M. Brown

# MIT Looks for Tech Square Partnership

**Tech Square, from Page 1**

since 2001, vacancy has been dropping, as biotechnology and other medical-related companies jockey to be near MIT and Harvard University.

Vacancy in the Cambridge laboratory market declined to 16.5 percent in the third quarter of 2005 from 22.6 percent in 2003, according to the real estate firm CB Richard Ellis/New England.

MIT bought Technology Square, a group of seven buildings and parking garage for almost 1,600 cars between Binney and Portland streets, in February 2001 from Beacon Capital Partners LLC of Boston, a private real estate firm. The City of Cambridge encouraged use

of the first floors of the building for retail shops, and MIT has leased space to 7-Eleven Inc., Quiznos Sub, FedEx Kinko's, Fitcorp, MIT Federal Credit Union, and Bank of America Corp.

About 17,000 feet of retail now occupies the first floors of Buildings 600 and 700 Technology Square.

"It makes the property look better and is a great opportunity to get some life into Main Street, which has always been a challenge historically," Marsh said.

MIT hopes to add about 20,000 square feet more, including space in three other buildings. The university is looking for a new tenant for space recently vacated by Polcari's restaurant, and new shops are expected to be added to the fronts of 200 and 500 Technology

Square.

The garage is located at Portland Street and Broadway. The Charles Stark Draper Laboratory Inc., at 555 Technology Square, on the Broadway side of the block, is separately owned and is not part of the group being sold.

The old Boston real estate firm Cabot, Cabot & Forbes Inc. and MIT jointly developed a five-building Technology Square campus over about 10 years ending in 1980, when they sold to Prudential Insurance Co. of America. Tenants then included Polaroid Corp., Draper, and MIT.

*MIT bought Technology Square, which includes seven buildings and a parking garage, in 2001.*

one building and soon as MIT took over in 2001, it began preparing the space for life sciences uses.

MIT's campus has about 11 million square feet of space, but the university has a financial interest in about 6 million additional square feet in the surrounding area. Three million or so of that is in University Park, located on the other side of the main campus and developed in a joint venture with Forest City Enterprises Inc.

Noting that MIT was involved in the original development of the area, Marsh said the university is open to selling or taking on a partner in ownership of the buildings — but would prefer the latter.

"Our hope is we remain involved here in some fashion," he said.

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## Exhuming Defunct Course 20, Faculty Seeks Its Rebirth As BE

By Beckett W. Sterner

NEWS EDITOR

Who knew biological engineering could raise the dead?

Having acquired the last critical ingredient — an undergraduate major — the Biological Engineering Division is conjuring up a brew to resuscitate Course 20 at the February 15 meeting of the faculty.

The revival met no opposition when proposed at the December faculty meeting to a strong showing of support by the Biological Engineering faculty.

Formally disbanded in 1988, Course 20, then the Program in Applied Biological Sciences, has had neither faculty nor an undergraduate

curriculum since.

The last graduate student in that program was Bruce Woodson, who lost contact with MIT a few years ago. Until that point, Course 20 had lived on as a single page in the Course Bulletin, offering the bare minimum of classes needed to enroll a graduate student: Selected Topics in Applied Biological Sciences (20.921) and Graduate Thesis (20.ThG).

But if all goes as planned Course 20 may soon take on eager new students ready to learn the mysteries of mathy biology. The number, previously incarnated as Food Technology, Nutrition Science, and Applied Biological Sciences, will rise again as Biological Engineering.

## Geeks Not 'Spectacularly Dorky'

Producers Ensure Contestants Play Within Boundary of Intended Plot

Geek, from Page 1

eyebrows were never plucked.

"I'm not a fan of dumb girls. I had no interest in any of the girls," he said.

In the month of taping, the contestants were confined to a giant mansion with fully catered meals, pool tables, and hot tub. Ankur said that there was always a casting person around the mansion.

Otherwise, Ankur said that he acted naturally while in the mansion, although he was portrayed as an arrogant intellectual from MIT. Ankur says, "It's not arrogance if it's actually true. Actually, I was playing it up a bit."

"The screenwriters have a general script about how they want an episode to play out," Mehta said. He said that the writers interviewed the cast to make sure the cast's actions roughly matched their plans for the plot. Also, editing took away some of Ankur's outrageous comments, and he said that in the television premier he noticed that quite a few of the audioclips were sliced.

The other male contestants on the show include Tyson, a Caltech graduate who stunned the beauties by solving a Rubik's cube behind his back and also seemed open to improving his social skills. There is also Chris, who was portrayed as a self-absorbed jerk with a biting and

sarcastic sense of humor. "The guys were portrayed reasonably well. They weren't spectacularly dorky," Ankur said.

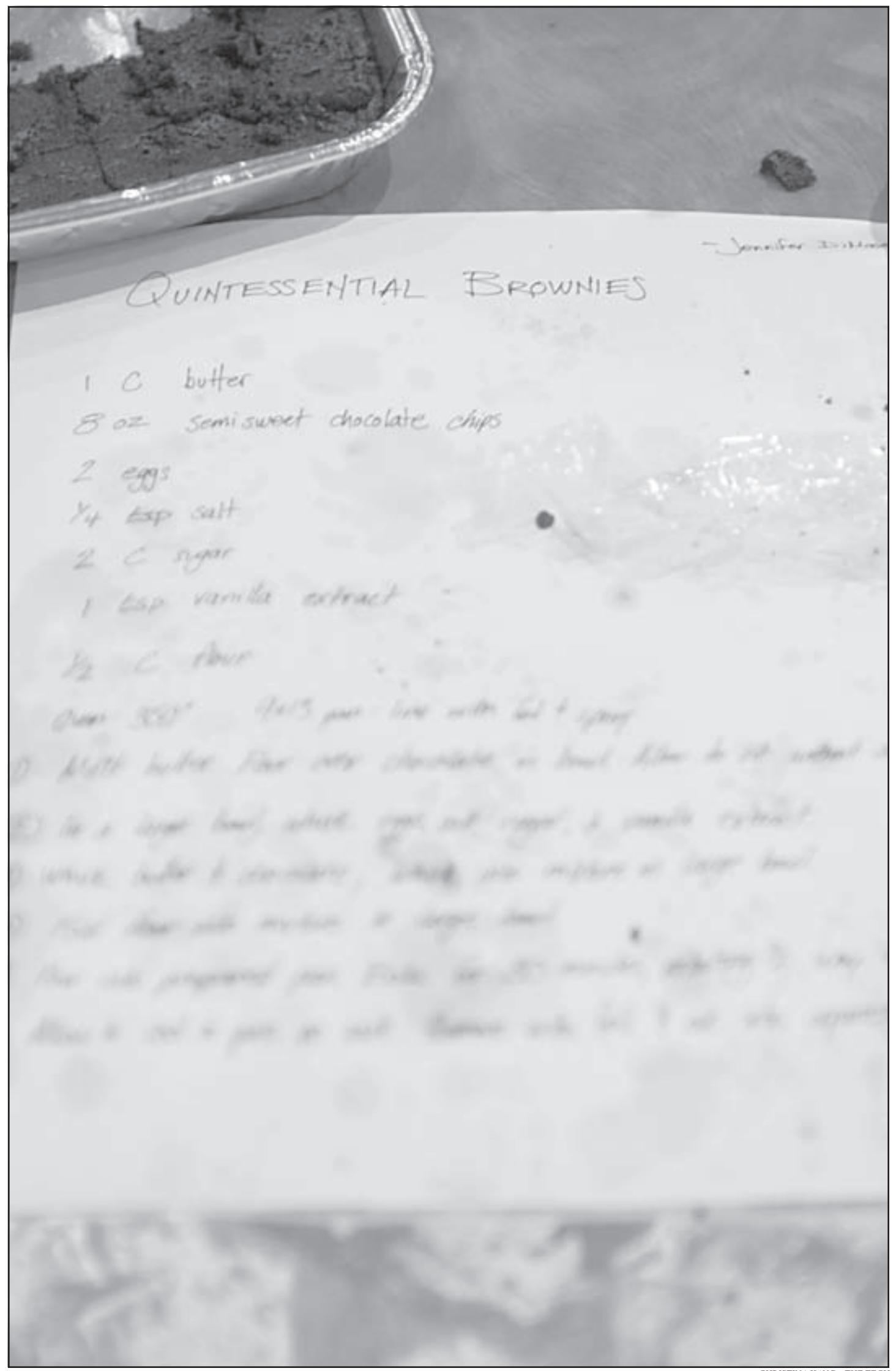
Many students who watched the first episode in 10-250 commented that the show furthered a lot of stereotypes about the typical MIT geek, but that the show approached them humorously, seemingly poking fun at the generalizations. On the show's official message board, several threads came from girl geeks who demanded their own version of the show. When asked whether female nerds would draw an audience, Ankur said, "The vast majority of the TV viewing population wouldn't like that."

### Solution to Sudoku

from page 7

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 3 |
| 9 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 2 |
| 8 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 4 |
| 4 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 7 | 8 |
| 5 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 4 | 1 |
| 2 | 1 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 6 |
| 3 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 5 |
| 6 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 3 | 9 |
| 1 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 7 |

The Tech



CHRISTINA KANG—THE TECH

The Battle of the Brownies, held by the Laboratory for Chocolate Science last Saturday, Jan. 14 in Walker Memorial Dining Hall, challenged all willing participants to please the palates of a panel of professors. This year's winner for home-made recipes was "Quintessential Brownies" by Jennifer DiMase '01.

join@the-tech.mit.edu

# Tulane Students Strive to Save Engineering Majors

By Susan Saulny  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

In the early 1900s, the Sewerage and Water Board here hired a young student from Tulane University's School of Engineering to help deal with flooding and drainage, the city's most vexing problems.

The student, Albert Baldwin Wood, designed a pumping system that not only drained areas that routinely flooded but also allowed the city to grow into a modern metropolis on what had been its swampy hinterlands. Four months ago, his pumps, some more than 90 years old, continued to churn water out of the city even as Hurricane Katrina knocked newer models out of service.

Given that legacy, engineering students at Tulane say, they are finding it hard to accept that the university, the city's premier academic institution, has chosen to eliminate majors in civil, environmental and electrical engineering, among others, as part of its own post-hurricane recovery plan.

They have reacted fiercely, undertaking a campaign on campus sidewalks, on the Internet, with elected officials and in the news media. Their rallying cry, as posted on trees in the University District, is, "These majors are needed in New Orleans now more than ever in order to help rebuild the city."

And messages written in chalk on the campus's sidewalks read, "We

survived Katrina but not the administration," even as a banner in one of the main engineering buildings reads, "Welcome Tulane Engineering Students: Tomorrow's Leaders!"

"We came back expecting to go headfirst into working with the city and the state to fix the levees, the transportation system and the power grid," said David O'Reilly, a first-year doctoral candidate in civil engineering. "There has not been an opportunity like this in our generation to rebuild an American city on this magnitude."

Instead, Mr. O'Reilly is likely to be leaving his native New Orleans by the end of the semester to find a research program in another city.

The School of Engineering is not the only part of the university to undergo changes in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, which left floodwater over two-thirds of the campus and caused up to \$250 million in property damage and more than \$90 million in operational losses.

Tulane also did away with its traditional undergraduate college system, Newcomb College for women and Tulane College for men, replacing it with one Undergraduate College. It eliminated its graduate school as an administrative entity, and an array of intercollegiate sports teams, as well as 230 full-time faculty members and 243 members of its staff, who were laid off. Those cuts included a sharp hit to the medical

school faculty, which was reduced by 180 positions, to 345.

But the students at the engineering school are among the most vocal, because they are losing six majors. Only two majors — biomedical and chemical engineering — will survive as part of a new School of Science and Engineering.

Engineering students in the programs that are being eliminated will be allowed to graduate in their majors if they can complete their studies by next year. Still, some students feel jilted.

"No one saw this coming; no one expected it," said Justin Mikowski, a computer engineering major from Tampa, Fla., who is a leading force in the campaign to change the university's mind. "We all thought engineering would be expanded with all the rebuilding that has to happen."

Scott S. Cowen, the university's president, who announced the changes on Dec. 8, defends the decision as thoughtful, necessary and final.

"I wish Katrina had never happened, and I wouldn't have to do any of these things — I'm sympathetic," Dr. Cowen said. "I admire their compassion and their enthusiasm to keep this going," he said of the students, "but the board has already made its decisions, and they have been implemented. They will not be reversed."

Still, Dr. Cowen met with engineering alumni as recently as last week, and many last-ditch efforts to

change his mind continue.

"New Orleans, as a city, owes its very life to the products of Tulane engineering and will not be able to rebuild without a strong engineering pool of knowledge at its base," said David A. Kanger, the president of the Society of Tulane Engineers.

Others, like a former dean of the School of Engineering, William C. Van Buskirk, said Dr. Cowen had hurt the school's reputation and its students in claiming that the relatively small engineering school had not gained national prominence and that it was unlikely to do so without a significant investment of resources.

Tulane has 900 undergraduate and graduate students in engineering.

"I think he really couched it wrong when he said these programs aren't strong enough to compete," Dr. Van Buskirk said. "It's just nonsense."

He noted that Tulane's legacy did not end with Albert Wood and his pumps. A more recent graduate, David Filo, a co-founder of the Internet giant Yahoo, holds a bachelor's degree in computer engineering from Tulane. And by other standards of success, the school also fared well, Dr. Van Buskirk said.

"It's more than a hundred years of tradition gone, and it's heartbreaking," he said.

Robert S. Boh, the president of Boh Brothers Construction, one of the most significant local businesses in the reconstruction effort, and a member of the School of Engineering's advisory board, said, "Tulane in engineering circles had a pretty good

reputation to begin with, and seemed to be improving in every category that's important, so the timing of this is curious, really."

Despite his position on the advisory board, Mr. Boh said he had not been consulted about the recovery plan.

Students said they were left to wonder how to market themselves to other universities and employers when their own university found its programs lacking. "Our efforts are falling on deaf ears," said Will Clarkson, a computer engineering major from Canton, Ohio.

Dr. Cowen said Tulane was offering \$2,000 in assistance to freshmen who would like to visit other campuses in the hope of transferring.

And Tulane will have a prominent role in the rebuilding effort, he said. The changes were intended in part to produce new areas of specialization for Tulane, including a partnership on urban issues with two of the city's historically black universities, Xavier and Dillard.

Xavier and Dillard, along with the other well-known colleges in the city, the University of New Orleans and Loyola University, all suffered damage and have streamlined their operations for the spring semester. But, unlike Tulane, none have cut majors or sports, even though their endowments are smaller than that of Tulane.

On that point, Dr. Cowen said Tulane had taken the lead in making unpopular but realistic and tough decisions.

"Hope is not a method," he said.

## Jones: Cultural Biases Hurt MIT Admissions

Admissions, from Page 1

you for the highest work of advancing civilization. You have to find a way to be happy here. Every single student here is challenged — they have their moments, but it's all in order to prepare you for your ultimate pass ... and that is not trivial."

Jones notes the cultural bias against students who are good in math and science, saying many people believe them to be geeks. She cites OpenCourseWare as an example of how MIT conveys its institution and culture to the rest of the world.

Many admitted students who turn down MIT criticize its curriculum as being too narrow, she said. Others

"I think of MIT as a samurai school."

—Marilee Jones

prefer to be in a place where there are people majoring in many different disciplines. Finally, some simply resort to the simplest reason: "it's not my kind of place," Jones said. In an age when students use college to help decide what they want

to do with their lives as opposed to learning a technical trade, many parents urge their children to get the most versatile degree possible, favoring a liberal arts degree over a technical one.

Currently, Harvard and Yale are the only two schools to which MIT loses more students than it wins, with Harvard winning over two-thirds of their joint admits. MIT loses few students to other schools of technology, Jones said.



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